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**Testimony Opposing Raised House Bill 6618
“AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR CERTAIN
PERSONS RECEIVING ABORTION CARE AND RELATED SERVICES
IN CONNECTICUT.”**

Thank you Senator Lesser, Representative Gilchrest, and honored members of the Human Services Committee for accepting my testimony. My name is Stephen Lyon, from Willimantic, CT, and I am providing testimony in opposition to House Bill 6618, An Act Concerning Medical Assistance for Certain Persons Receiving Abortion Care and Related Services in Connecticut, because the legislature should not allocate funds to be expended on behalf of those outside of Connecticut, at the expenses of the taxpayer.

Connecticut does not have a revenue problem; it has a spending problem. From raising taxes, to proposals for tolls on state roads, the legislature seems to be constantly trying to figure out ways to increase our revenue. However, instead of trying to find ways to trim expenditures, proposals like this get made, which would result in an additional 2 million dollars being added to this year's budget. This would be an issue even if we were just talking about funding procedures for Connecticut residents, but this proposed expenditure doesn't even benefit the individuals who are paying for it! There are so many unaddressed issues to handle in Connecticut – it is inexcusable to be pouring our limited resources into other states. To use an analogy, passengers on airplanes are always told to make sure that their own masks are on securely prior to aiding their children or other passengers who are struggling to put on a mask – we cannot truly help others until we have taken care of our own issues first.

On a more technical note, this proposed legislation is irresponsibly drafted, based on vagueness in the language. The term “and related services” is used throughout the bill, but is undefined. If Connecticut taxpayers are going to be forced to pay for something related to abortion, for individuals from other states, they should at least know what they are paying for. What is actually covered? Are airfare, hotels, & prepared food covered? Technically these are all “related services,” and while it may not be the intent of the legislation, how are we to know? If this committee, and the legislature as a whole, wants to pass something this controversial, there is a responsibility to be clear about what is actually being proposed.

Additionally, there is one section of this legislation which is misleading at best. Under section (4)(b), at line 25, the Raised Bill states, “The commissioner shall apply for a waiver under Section 1115 of the Social Security Act and any other federal approval required to secure federal financial reimbursement for the cost of such care and services.” For those who are unaware, Federal funding of abortions is prohibited by law, due to the Hyde Amendment. With this being the case, there can be / will be no reimbursement for expenditures for “abortion care and related services” – the taxpayers of Connecticut will be footing any such bills in their entirety.

There are several other issues associated with this proposal, including the eligibility verification, the income eligibility limit, and other ethical/moral concerns, but others have addressed those issues eloquently and I join with most of their concerns.

For the reasons I have stated, I oppose HB6618, and request that you vote “no” on any such proposal, now or in the future.

Sincerely,

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